

VIEWS AND REVIEWS OF A WEEK IN THE MARKETS OF ART

PAINTINGS
and
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by
Albert Felix Schmitt
March 1st to March 15th
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EXHIBITION
Sculpture by
NANNA MATHEWS BRYANT
March 15th to April 1st inclusive



"The Hon. Mrs. Aubrey Herbert," by Ambrose McEvoy; on view at Duveen Brothers.

Ambrose McEvoy's Exhibition of Portraits an Important Feature.

By HENRY MCBRIDE.
THE Ambrose McEvoy portraits on exhibition at Duveen's may be regarded as one sign that at last the war is over.

With this as a beginning other distinguished foreign artists may be induced to send us their wares, and the old time international exchange will gradually be restored.

The shutting down upon importations brought about by the submarine danger was not without its salutary effects. For two, almost three, years we have been turning our souls inside out in default of any other distraction in the effort to weigh both our aspirations and achievements. The war, whatever else it may have done, has made us more American in spirit, and vastly more sensitive to what is genuinely native in our art. But as too long a period of introspection tends toward self-consciousness—a quality we have enough of and to spare anyway—it is with real relief and lightness of spirit that we can turn to the disinterested and often enervating task of measuring others.

Mr. McEvoy, as the first of these pilgrims, is distinctly welcome. He will be fashionable, for one thing, and in that alone he confers an obligation upon us, for precious few of our own men succeed in catching Fashion's eye. Fashion's favor, of course, is a shifty game, especially in democracies, but it is always reassuring to see it fastening upon something worthy of itself; to see it approaching "form."

Mr. McEvoy brings with him portraits of the Hon. Mrs. Aubrey Herbert, the Countess of Lytton, the Duchess of Marlborough, the Viscountess Wimborne, Princess Bibesco, the Hon. Mrs. Francis McLaren, the Hon. Mrs. Cecil Baring, Lady Gwendoline Churchill and Lady Diana Duff-Cooper. These ladies, according to Mr. McEvoy, are as handsome as they are distinguished. There will be a great crush to see them, and, if I mistake not, a great crush to emulate them.

The art of portrait painting in America during the last few years has been visibly declining before our eyes, and in spite of our outcries it seemed dangerously near the point of total extinction. A stimulant of some kind seemed necessary to keep our portraits alive, and perhaps Mr. McEvoy's art provides it. At any rate let us hope so. He cannot himself do all the beautiful and distinguished Americans who will now wish to be painted, and there, you see, is where the local men come in. They will all study the exhibition and will possibly have varying opinions upon Mr. McEvoy's technique and some of them may imitate some of his idiosyncrasies. Imitating foreign idiosyncrasies is one of our specialties; I have less hope that our men will as quickly appropriate the virtue upon which his success is founded.

Mr. McEvoy's Secret.
Mr. McEvoy's women are smart. That, in a phrase, is his artistic secret. We have plenty of painters in America who know when a woman is pretty, but there is not one that I know of—now that Sargent has put portrait painting aside—who seems to appreciate feminine distinction. Now the modern woman—as all the best novelists tell us—craves

smartness rather than good looks. Certainly good looks without it to all intents and purposes are futile—and the artist who panders to this craving—why, the world is his!

In England they have rather more liberal ideas upon the subject of feminine pulchritude than we have. Here it is apt to be Mary Garden or nothing. We have drifted into the extraordinary notion that a great beauty must assault all the senses at once. But in England a woman can be demure and a beauty, or severe as a Spartan, or even domestic. "Professional beauties" still flourish there. Americans have forgot what the term means, although both words are in the dictionary and are to be taken literally. The position or the pretension to the position is not maintained without strategy. For instance, if Mrs. Herbert, and the Viscountess Wimborne, or Mrs. McLaren emerge from the McEvoy brushes with all their complexions and dimples and their diverse spiritualities intact, and if the rumor be noised abroad that Mr. McEvoy paints beauties, and first class beauties only; and the evidence be there at the National Portrait Society's show, surrounded by a struggling mob of the sort of people one doesn't know; why if one be a beauty, there's nothing for it, is there, but to have one's secretary book sittings with Mr. McEvoy at once? All this sounds horribly disillusioned and cynical; but the fact remains that Mr. McEvoy has painted all the best looking women in London society, and will soon be in a position to know if we have comparable material for his peculiar talent in New York.

But meantime what will not his jealous and disappointed rivals of the brush be saying? "He cannot draw, he has no values, no designs, and most certainly no color. Bah!" &c. But will society heed these criticisms? Certainly not. What these wretches say has nothing to do with the case. Mr. McEvoy makes one smart. Mr. McEvoy makes one spiritual. What is the use in being smart and spiritual if these so-called good artists like Major Sir William Orpen made one look like a barmaid?

Quite Like an American.

For an Englishman, Mr. McEvoy is astonishingly American. He is a native of the sort of sort are increasingly frequent in modern life. Even Lloyd George, one of the few men whom this artist has attempted, has always seemed to me to have been especially designed by Providence for the painter's palette. I think most Americans would willingly swap W. J. Bryan for him, with nothing to boot. And only last summer in Paris I met at the same party a cold and calculating Frenchman who came from the Marais, and one who was all fire and brimstone, pure Tarascon, who was born in Le Havre! These "sports" are so frequent one can no longer be surprised at them.

Mr. McEvoy's Americanism is betrayed by his nervousness. Mr. McEvoy is very nervous. That is really why he doesn't draw, for it is clear he is intelligent enough to comprehend drawing. And that is why he takes the corners of the canvases with splashes of paint that are quite out of value and meaningless. In saying Mr. McEvoy succeeds with his drawing I should qualify it by admitting that he draws the face. He draws the head really very well, but not the figure, and not the hands. Evidently at the Slade School, where Mr. McEvoy studied, Prof. Brown was not too critical of his pupils' figures. This is quite all right, to be sure, and no one will object seriously to this procedure, least of all, the charming sitters, who, like Mr. McEvoy, are willing to chance their figures for the sake of their faces.

I myself, for instance, frankly admit that I like best in this series the portrait of the Hon. Mrs. Aubrey Herbert, and at the same time am perfectly aware that the neck has been attached to the torso in an outrageous and grotesque manner, and that the proportions are more out of the line in the least. Both pictures are full of distinction, and posterity will probably decide that both are "in the period." But they are un-English.

Mr. McEvoy's History.

Dr. Christian Brinton arranged the catalogue and from his introduction the following extract may be permitted: "There are not a few reasons why Arthur Ambrose McEvoy should have chosen painting as his profession. Born in Wiltshire, August 12, 1878, the boy early came under the influence of Whistler, who was a personal friend of his father, and who was among the first to discover his talent and encourage him to devote himself to the study and practice of art. The bond between the two families was in fact of long standing, for during the civil war Capt. McEvoy and Dr. Whistler, the artist's brother, had served together under the Confederate flag. And upon the close of the war both settled in England and continued a friendship begun at the Battle of Bull Run, when the young Irish American officer, who had been seriously wounded, was tended by the American army surgeon.

later became one of the world's foremost authorities on submarine warfare. His crowning achievement was the invention of the hydrophone, by means of which undersea craft are detected by sound while cruising beneath the surface of the water.

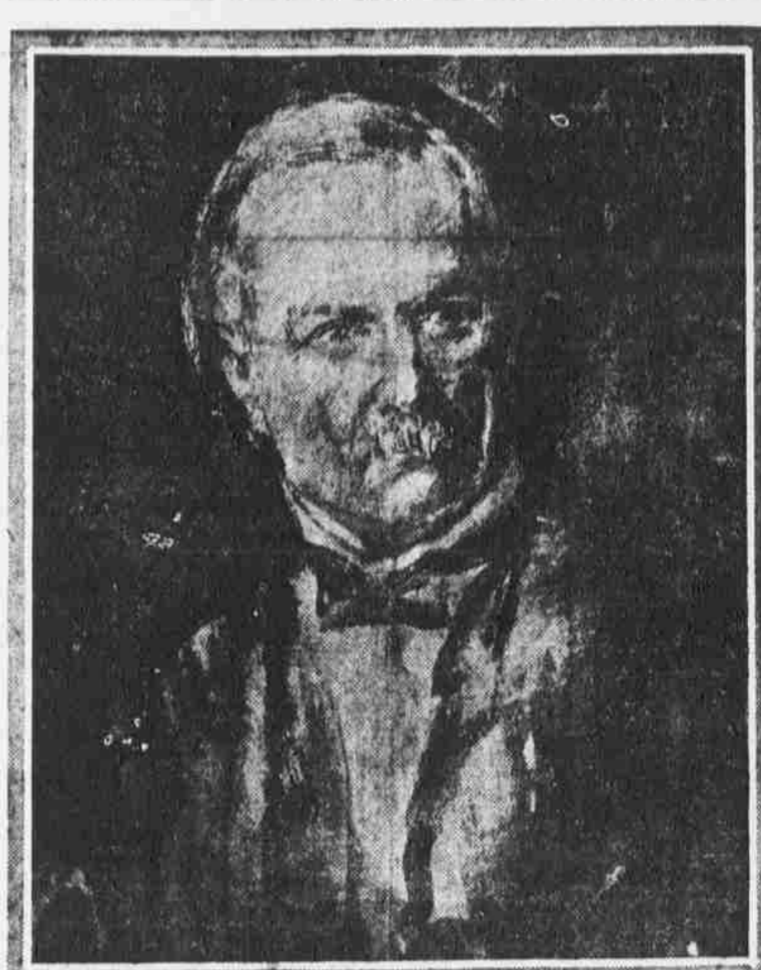
"With an apprenticeship quite as inspirational as educational, it was not difficult for Ambrose McEvoy to conceive that essentially personal quality which is the chief characteristic of his production. Painting to him was from the outset a matter of feeling as well as observation. He saw with the mind as well as the eye, and it is for this reason that his art in its initial phases makes frank appeal to one's imaginative sensibilities. Possessing a highly selective vision, he restricted his choice to a few congenial themes, yet within these limitations he achieved complete unity of mood and manner. His method was intensive rather than extensive.

Influences at School.

"Of his sojourn at the Slade Mr. McEvoy has not yet saved praise. The influence of Prof. Brown was distinctly inspiring and the instruction stimulating as well as sound. Of special interest were the courses in the study of the drawing and composition of the old masters. The young man, in fact, absorbed much during this period from the great spirits of the past, and, furthermore, spent no little time in the National Gallery and the Soane Museum executing copies after Titian, Rembrandt, Hogarth and Gainsborough. It was this preliminary training, together with the sketching trips in England and the summers spent in France, mainly at Dieppe with his friend Walter Sickert, that gave purpose and direction to his maturing talent. And ever potent, too, was the influence of Whistler, for some two or three times a week the young aspirant would leave his modest studio in Danvers street, Chelsea, with a portfolio of sketches under his arm and drop around for a friendly criticism from the master of the White House.

"Ambrose McEvoy's conversion to portraiture has been accompanied by a change in technique as well as a gradual transposition of theme. Having followed woman from the quietude of mid-Victorian days into the stimulating atmosphere of contemporary life and scene, it became necessary to clothe her accordingly, to present her in the prevailing mode of the time. You cannot rightly gauge the appearance and personality of the modern woman unless you surround her with that fluid radiance, natural or artificial, which impressionism has added to the latter day palette. Every generation, every decade, experiences its own special color reactions, and in adding to his art new chromatic combinations Mr. McEvoy merely proved his response to varying conditions, social and artistic. He rightly distanced that smiling creation, who had so grown in grace and significance, demanded of him fresh proof of professional resource. For she had definitely stepped from the dim drawing rooms of the late seventeenth century into the play of sunlight and the flash of the electric lamp.

"With the full length portrait of the Hon. Mrs. Cecil Baring, which marked his second appearance with the Inter-



"Lloyd George," by Ambrose McEvoy; on view at Duveen Brothers.

"One" has to read Sherwood Anderson's "Winesburg, Ohio," to understand the inner growth of the Burchfield boy. There is the temptation at first to rejoice in the Winesburgs and Salops that are producing such work as Burchfield's and Anderson's until the price they pay for their vision is realized. In the eyes of the young from all over the land can be seen the capacity for this vision; yet most often the work they show you is poor imitative stuff with the stamp of the magazines upon it. Then again we get sight of a gentle soul in whom the love of beauty is blocked and violence results as in Burchfield.

"The price can easily be estimated in his work. Too acute a realization, occasionally a slump in feeling and a blurred sensation, then with growing adjustment between sensation and power, a terrible plunge forward with the idea well in hand, and we have "Miners' Huts," "The Corner Store," "Backyards," "Black Houses" or the "Railroad," in which you hear fairly the shriek of the whistle of the unseen train. "Occasionally only as yet does Burchfield dare to be at peace with the life in his village on the edge of industrial America, and to show us that already he can paint for sheer love of it, as in

"Wang Shih-Jang, the head of the numerous members of this house, has done this with the hope, on the first hand, that his Majesty the Emperor, who in benevolence and good government equals the ancient Sages, Emperors Yao and Shun, will receive auspicious recognition in different forms from heaven, and, on the second hand, that our master priest and all our forebears, those in heaven as well as those on earth, will each and all, by the merit of this, come out of the Entrance to Misery and go to the Land of Happiness."

Jackson Higgs writes that he has an astonishing object of art to exhibit shortly. He says:

"There stands in the Capitol at Washington a bronze bust of George Washington, bearing, in French, an inscription of which the following is a translation: 'George Washington. By David D'Angers. Bronze. Given by France to the United States to replace that in marble destroyed by fire in 1822.' You will notice it refers to the marble bust which was destroyed, but I have conclusive proof that the original marble was not destroyed; furthermore, I shall be exhibiting it within a few weeks.

"It seems to me that the matter is of national importance and mentioning the fact will be interesting to your readers. In my opinion, this is the finest sculpture of Washington in existence, and the connecting links between the dates of the presentation of the original to the United States Government by public subscription in France, the apparent destruction of it at the time the Library was destroyed, the finding of David's original plaster in the museum at Angers, the presentation of the bronze from it and receiving by the United States in 1905 are particularly interesting."

The Memorial Crafts Institute will hold the first exhibit of commemorative art at the Hotel Pennsylvania from March 18 to April 15. Mr. Frank Purdy, H. Van Buren Magnuson and Robert Altken are the jury of award for the prize competition. Subject, a war memorial for a small community. Monument designed to cost \$25,000. Open to all. Art students, architects, draughtsmen, architects and designers have submitted drawings. Prize winning designs and a large number of others will be hung in important positions. Photographs, renderings and scale models of cemetery and church memorials to be exhibited. Subjects have been selected with the purpose of creating a more general appreciation of the memorial as a problem in architecture and sculpture. Sun disks, perfoliated and exchequered as memorials are shown with a view of combating the popular impression that cemetery art in America is funeral and forbidding.

The White Plains High School War Memorial Fund, the Altar to Liberty for Brooklyn and other public memorials of timely interest are to be shown.

The poster design department of the New York Evening School of Industrial Art, 204 East Forty-second street, is now under the direction of J. Fraser Childrey and Ralph W. Hixson. Art students desiring to take up this phase of commercial work and workers in studios, engraving and litho house, who desire to perfect their technique may register any evening next week between 7 and 9 o'clock. Instruction and materials are free. Applicants should take with them samples of their work.

The need of art is most appreciably felt by its absence. Like many good things, if assured it becomes taken for granted. Thus much noble endeavor is unappreciated. With the burning of the Fine Arts Building a great monument dedicated to art has perished. On its walls many of the nation's greatest canvases have been hung, and thousands of aspirants have competed for the honor of representation. But the time of need brings forth willing helpers. When the Allied Arts of America, whose seventh annual exhibition was to have taken place in the Fine Arts Building this spring, found themselves homeless many offers of hospitality were extended. With a sympathetic sense of the situation and true generosity Mr. Kleinberger has placed his spacious galleries at their disposal, and, recognizing this splendid opportunity of displaying their pictures the forthcoming exhibition of the Allied Artists promises to be of universal importance. The exhibition will open on March 15 and continue until April 5. There will be no admission charged.

NOTES AND ACTIVITIES IN THE WORLD OF ART

The De Zayas Gallery has established in place of the collection of French modern art an exhibition of ancient Chinese jade and sculpture. No readjustment of the point of view seems to be necessary, and the atmosphere of the gallery remains the same; so that the feeling of such amateurs as Miss Belle Graene, who claims that she cares only for the earliest and latest forms of art, can be appreciated.

The feature of the collection is an early Kwan-Yin, in stone, benign in spirit and executed with the loftiest simplicity. Mr. De Zayas has had the inscriptions upon the pieces translated, and the legends as to the workman-ship. Here is one, upon a votive statu-

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